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## FACT SHEET

### Initiative to Promote Afghan Civil Society (I-PACS)

#### OVERVIEW

A strong, vibrant civil society is an essential component of a flourishing democracy. USAID's Initiative to Promote Afghan Civil Society (I-PACS) encourages the development and growth of a politically active civil society in Afghanistan with an emphasis on women-focused organizations. Through I-PACS, USAID strengthens the role and viability of civil society in Afghanistan by providing technical assistance, capacity building training and grant support to civil society organizations (CSOs), as well as ensuring the implementation of the NGO law.

#### ACTIVITIES

- Assessing the status of civil society in Afghanistan.
- Ensuring effective implementation of the NGO Law.
- Training to build the capacity of civil society organizations.
- Facilitating public dialogue on civil society, NGOs, women's rights, advocacy and human rights.
- Providing grants to civil society organizations – especially women-focused organizations – for institutional support, community development, advocacy, and special solicitations.

#### RESULTS

- Reached 314,460 beneficiaries (154,354 men and 160,106 women) through training and grants.
- Created a comprehensive living document on the status of civil society in Afghanistan, distributing 3,000 copies to the public, government officials, the donor/NGO community, and policy makers.
- Facilitated the process of developing a new law on NGOs, which was signed into law in 2005. 520 copies of the law were distributed to all 34 provinces in Afghanistan (in Dari and Pashto).
- Produced 93 radio programs and held five student competitions to educate GIRoA officials, civil society organizations, and the general public on issues including civil society, the NGO Law, human rights, women's right, and gender issues.
- Disbursed a total of 118 grants to civil society organizations and local non-governmental organizations worth a total amount of \$7,534,042.
- 3,000 visitors used resources at Civil Society Support Centers throughout the country.
- Provided capacity building and training to 215 Afghan Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).
- Target CSOs improved their organizational capacity by 65 percent as compared to a 2006 baseline survey.
- Organized seven dialogue sessions between religious leaders and civil society groups on a range of subjects including the concepts of civil society and democracy.
- Developed a cadre of 98 Afghan NGO capacity building trainers.
- Increased the advocacy skills of 29 Afghan CSOs.
- Supported 74 women-managed CSOs in 32 provinces.
- Held the two-day First Women's Council (FWC) in Kabul on October 28-29, 2008 to advance the National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan (NAPWA) and draw public and government attention to issues facing Afghan women. More than 500 women from 33 provinces participated.